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May 7, 1981

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Personal and
Confidential

Mr. William K. Coors
Chairman of the Board and
Chief Executive Officer
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Dear Mr. Coors:

I greatly appreciated the opportunity to listen to the talk you gave the other night at the dinner meeting for the D. U. 1864 Club held at the Coors Brewery in Golden, especially since I had in mind soliciting your advice on a personal problem which is of the greatest importance to me and, I think, the University of Denver, as well. Please bear with me while I take the liberty of explaining the details of my problem.

It concerns my husband Wolfgang Yourgrau who died in mid-1979, after having been professor at the University of Denver for 15 years. Since my husband was a scholar of great international reputation, a Memorial Volume of scholarly essays in his honor, contributed to by no less than 65 eminent scientists and other scholars from all over the world (including 3 Nobel laureates), is at present being readied for publication by Plenum Corporation in New York. This memorial volume, by common consent, will be a monumental work without equal in its genre. Its publication would appropriately honor my husband and, at the same time, enhance the visibility and reputation of Denver University all over the world.

All this is a wonderful prospect except for one fact: The publication of the Memorial Volume is now stalled because the editor, Alwyn van der Merwe (Professor of physics at DU and editor of the international journal Foundations of Physics), has been unable after nearly 2 years of trying, to compel the CIA to release the information they have on file about my husband's very significant role in intelligence operations of the American OSS during World War II, information which Professor van der Merwe desperately needs for the completion of his crucial Introductory Chapter to the Memorial Volume.

As you will gather from copies of his correspondence herewith attached, Professor van der Merwe has left no stone unturned to secure the information in question, to which he, incidentally, is certainly entitled under the Freedom of Information Act. His efforts have included an urgent call for help on the

Mr. William K. Coors

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Washington Office of Congresswoman Pat Schroeder and a written appeal, now already 9 months' old and supported by a tearful letter of my own, to the CIA Information Review Committee. All this has been to no avail. While the Information and Privacy Coordinator of the CIA has never denied our right of access to my husband's files, Prof. van der Merwe is none the less required to patiently "stand in line" for an unspecified period of time until requests pre-dating his have been processed. For the practical purposes of the Memorial Volume, this would mean that he would not have access at all to the sources of information he needs.

It is my fervent wish that my husband's role in the OSS during World War II becomes a matter of public record, through Prof. van der Merwe's planned biographical chapter, while I am still alive. Since I am past 70 and suffering from impaired health (including a minor recent stroke and partial loss of vision), you will realize that time is not on my side. I was especially disturbed by a recent news item according to which it will become increasingly more difficult to secure information under the Freedom of Information Act. I am fearful that this new development might mean that the information about my husband will forever remain a secret.

I think I may be forgiven for drawing the following comparison. When, during the War, my husband's help was sought by the OSS, he joined this organization voluntarily and without hesitation. By contrast, when Prof. van der Merwe, acting essentially on my behalf and that of my children, in turn makes the comparatively insignificant request for information from the CIA files, we are effectively rebuffed, since we are told to wait our turn behind individuals many of whom, no doubt, have all the time in the world, no personal stake in the information that is being sought, and finally no claim to reciprocal loyalty to the CIA, which I think my husband through his unconditional services to the OSS and America has undeniably earned.

I trust you will have complete understanding for the depth of my emotion and will thus pardon me for turning to you, as perhaps my only hope, with an urgent appeal for advice and help on the matter under consideration: In view of your wide range of influential contacts in Washington, including possibly Mr. William Casey, the Director himself of the CIA, may I be so bold as to ask if you would be so very kind as to intercede on my behalf with the proper individual or individuals to see what, if anything, can be done to get the CIA moving without any further delay on my and Prof. van der Merwe's request for information.

Your interest in my problem would be greatly appreciated, especially since I am well aware of the overwhelming volume of your other problems and obligations.

May I have the pleasure of hearing from you very soon? Should you find it convenient to call, perhaps on further points of information, my telephone number is 757-4016.

Cordially yours,

Thella Yourgrau

TY/bg

Enc. Correspondence
with CIA